



Interim Forest Management Plan

Property Identifiers

Property Name: Nelson Dewey

Property Designation: State Park

DNR Property Code: 9360

Forestry Property Code: 2210

Property Location: Grant County

Property Acreage: 743

Master Plan Date: 1980

Property Manager: Chad Breuer

Property Assessment

The following should be considered during the property assessment:

A. Ecological Landscape description and property context:

Nelson Dewey State Park is in the Western Coulees and Ridges Ecological Landscape which is characterized by its highly eroded, unglaciated topography with steep sided valleys and ridges, high gradient headwaters streams and large rivers with extensive, complex floodplains and terraces. Dendritic drainage patterns are well-developed in this mostly unglaciated Ecological Landscape. Natural lakes are restricted to the floodplains of large rivers. Large warm-water rivers are especially important here, and include the Wisconsin. Numerous spring-fed (cold-water) headwaters streams occur here. Cool-water streams are also common. Current vegetation is a mix of forest (41%), agriculture (36%), and grassland (14%) with wetlands (5%) mostly in the river valleys. The primary forest cover is oak-hickory. Maple-basswood forests that are dominated by sugar maple, basswood and red maple are common in areas that had not burned frequently. Dry rocky bluffs may support xeric stands of native white pine, sometimes mixed with red or even jack pine. Prairies are now restricted to steep south- or west-facing bluffs, unplowed outwash terraces along the large rivers and a few other sites.

The park is within two different landtype associations (LTA). The uplands are in the Hills and Valleys-Wisconsin River Drainage Landtype Association (222Lc18). The characteristic landform of the LTA is hilly, and most of the sandstone bedrock is found within five feet of the surface. Soils in this land type association are well drained and moderately well drained silts and loams with a silt loam or sandy loam surface over non-calcareous clayey or loamy residuum or over silty loess; most areas over limestone, sandstone or shale bedrock. The bottomlands of the park are in the Mississippi River Valley Train-South LTA (222Lc17). The characteristic landform pattern is formed from stream deposition and consists of river islands and flood plains and is nearly level. Soils are excessively drained and poorly drained sandy soils with a loamy fine sand or sand surface over non-calcareous sand alluvium or outwash.



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B. General property description – management, adjacent land uses, topography, soils, etc.

Long before prospectors discovered lead in southwestern Wisconsin and Marquette and Juliet canoed the Wisconsin River, Native Americans hunted the valleys and ridges, fished the Mississippi River and raised food near their village in the shadow of the bluffs. Remains of these occupations hold clues to the lifestyles and activities of the people who lived here so long ago.

Three groups of burial mounds and two village sites have been found within the boundaries of Nelson Dewey State Park. Artifacts from the villages indicate that this area was inhabited as early as 7,000 years ago. The oldest burial mounds in the park may be more than 2,000 years old. Most of the mounds appear to have been built between A.D. 500 and 900.

The property was established in 1935 by the Wisconsin Legislature to commemorate the farmstead of our first governor, Nelson Dewey. A Works Progress Administration project was authorized to clean up the grounds, restore the buildings and build roads and a shelter in the park.

Vegetation management in the past has included hazard tree management, pesticide application and prescribed fire. Row crops are grown on some acreage under farming agreements.

Nelson Dewey State Park abuts the village of Cassville on the south, and the Mississippi River forms the western park boundary (Map 1). The park is bisected, north-south, by county highway VV and a railroad. On the Wisconsin side of the Mississippi, the uplands within five miles of Nelson Dewey are almost all cleared for agriculture, most of which are in row crops. Many of the drainages within one to two miles of the river are wooded. Otherwise, upland tree cover is mostly in small woodlots.

Soils on the uplands of the park are almost all silt loams on variably steep slopes; some of the soils are described as being moderately eroded. There are rock outcrops on the steep slopes. Sandy loam and alluvium occur on the frequently flooded lowlands along the Mississippi River.

C. Current forest types, size classes and successional stages (% of total park acreage) (see Map 2)

- **Oak:** (53%) 372 acres; dates of origin 1895-1945; almost all large sawlogs with 1 stand of hardwood small sawlogs.
- **Bottomland Hardwoods:** (22%) 155 acres; date of origin 1920; hardwood large sawlogs.
- **Central Hardwoods:** (7%) 51 acres; dates of origin 1928-1963; hardwood poles to large sawlogs.
- **Northern Hardwoods:** (4%) 29 acres; dates of origin 1928-1948; hardwood small to large sawlogs.
- **Aspen:** (<1%) 3 acres; date of origin 1983; hardwood small sawlogs, large sawlogs.
- **Non-forest Cover Types:** grasslands (13%, 88 acres).

D. NHI: Endangered, Threatened, Special Concern, Species of Greatest Conservation Need (SGCN)



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Taxon group	<i>Total species</i>	<i>Endangered</i>	<i>Threatened</i>	<i>Special Concern</i>
Animal	43	11	16	16
Plant	11	0	1	10

One of the animal species is federally threatened and three are federal species of concern. Several of the animals are aquatic including fish, mussels and dragonflies that occur in the Mississippi River. Four of the plant species are based on historical records.

- E. **Wildlife Action Plan Conservation Opportunity Areas (COA), Important Bird Areas (IBA):** Included in the Lower Wisconsin Bluffs and Floodplain COA; bounded on the west by the Mississippi River COA; contained within the Wyalusing to Dewey IBA and bounded by the Upper Mississippi River IBA.
- F. **Significant historical, cultural, or archeological features:** Nelson Dewey State Park has two historical sites that are documented: the Dewey Mansion with accompanying buildings and an old lead mine. The park contains 55 Indian mounds include conical, linear and compound types. Activities with potential to disturb archaeological or historical sites will only be undertaken after consultation with the DNR Archaeologist. Any sites with cultural or historical value will be managed in accordance with guidance and statutory requirements (see ss. 44.40 and DNR Manual Code 1810.10).
- G. **Invasive species:** Invasive species known to occur at the park include non-native bush honeysuckle, wild parsnip, autumn olive, garlic mustard and emerald ash borer. This list is not all inclusive.
- H. **High Value Conservation Forests (HCVF), existing State Natural Areas (SNA) designations, or other resources/natural community types limited in the landscape:**
There is one SNA embedded within the park:

Dewey Heights Prairie rests atop a southwest-facing bluff between 800-870 feet high overlooking the Mississippi River. The cap rock is Ordovician-age dolomite covered only partially by thin soil with exposed cap rocks, ledges, and cliffs. A dry, limey prairie dominated by big and little blue-stem, side-oats and hairy grama, June grass, Indian grass and needle grass occupies the steep slopes.

Older forested stands in the park have potential to be considered HCVF.
- I. **Primary public uses (recreation):** Recreational activities include camping, picnicking, hiking, biking, snowshoeing, nature study, bird watching, hunting and trapping.
- J. **Biotic Inventory Status:** None scheduled.
- K. **Deferral/consultation area designations:** None

IFMP components

Management Objectives: (Outline primary forest management objectives):

1. The park's master plan references vegetation management in Sections II and VII. Section II.C describes how vegetation potential helps fulfill the purposes and needs of



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the park. It states: "The most significant potential for the property's vegetation is to provide the necessary park-like forested setting to best serve the recreational and interpretive needs of the user. Most of the existing use areas contain a variety of tree species and any dead, dying or high-risk trees in these areas should be removed. Cutting operations in the park should be restricted to that necessary for the safety and aesthetics to cutting for disease or insect control. The overall management program for the park will be directed toward preserving its natural appearance without sacrificing the safety of the public." Section VII.C.1 discusses vegetative management in the park. This section states: "Vegetative management techniques will be used to maintain and enhance the safety, aesthetic quality and wildlife habitat of the park. Pathological tree removal will occur to insure a healthy timber stand. Intensive recreation areas will be maintained to appear as natural as possible so as to harmonize with the rest of natural vegetation cover of the property." This IFMP applies to vegetation management used for hazard tree management, especially as related to oak wilt, and for pathological tree removal and wildlife habitat in Stand 22.

2. Manage invasive species in accordance with the 2014 [statewide conifer and invasive species management variance](#), especially black locust.
3. Manage Dewey Heights Prairie SNA as a dry prairie reserve and as an ecological reference area. Natural processes and prescribed fire will determine the structure of the prairie. Follow the 1989 Dewey Heights Prairie State Natural Area Management Plan regarding "weedy" tree management.

Property Prescriptions (Identify specific and pertinent prescriptions by area or forest type, including passive management areas, extended rotation, and other information that will help achieve the objectives)

1. Manage hazard trees, including those infected with oak wilt in the family and group campgrounds (areas outlined in yellow on Map 2) and in the park road corridor using a variety of techniques, including the use of commercial timber sales. In order to limit damage, some trees currently not infected with oak wilt may also need to be removed to mitigate the expansion of oak wilt pockets via underground root-grafting. Current oak wilt management guidance will be utilized to determine what management strategy should be used.
2. Manage oak in 23 acres of stand 22 located in the NENE4 Section 13 T3N R6W. Use commercial timber harvest to regenerate an oak hickory/central hardwood stand, emphasizing white oak regeneration. Use even-aged regeneration in the form of an overstory removal/seed tree harvest method. A leave-tree relative density of 5% to 15% will be used across the harvest area. Non-commercial timber stand improvement practices, prescribed fire and tree planting will all be used to support the oak regeneration.
3. Control black locust and other priority invasive species using appropriate techniques such as girdling and herbicide use.
4. In coordination with the SNA program, manage Dewey Heights Prairie SNA using prescribed fire, brushing, tree harvest and invasive species control. "Weedy" tree species may be managed through commercial or non-commercial techniques. Hazard trees will be removed over and near designated trails in the SNA.

Summary of Public Involvement and Comments Received

Maps (Optional)

- a. Property Boundary and ownership Maps
- b. Forest Cover Type Maps



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PREPARED BY:

Property Manager

Date

APPROVED:

Area Program Supervisor

Date

REVIEWED BY:

Forester

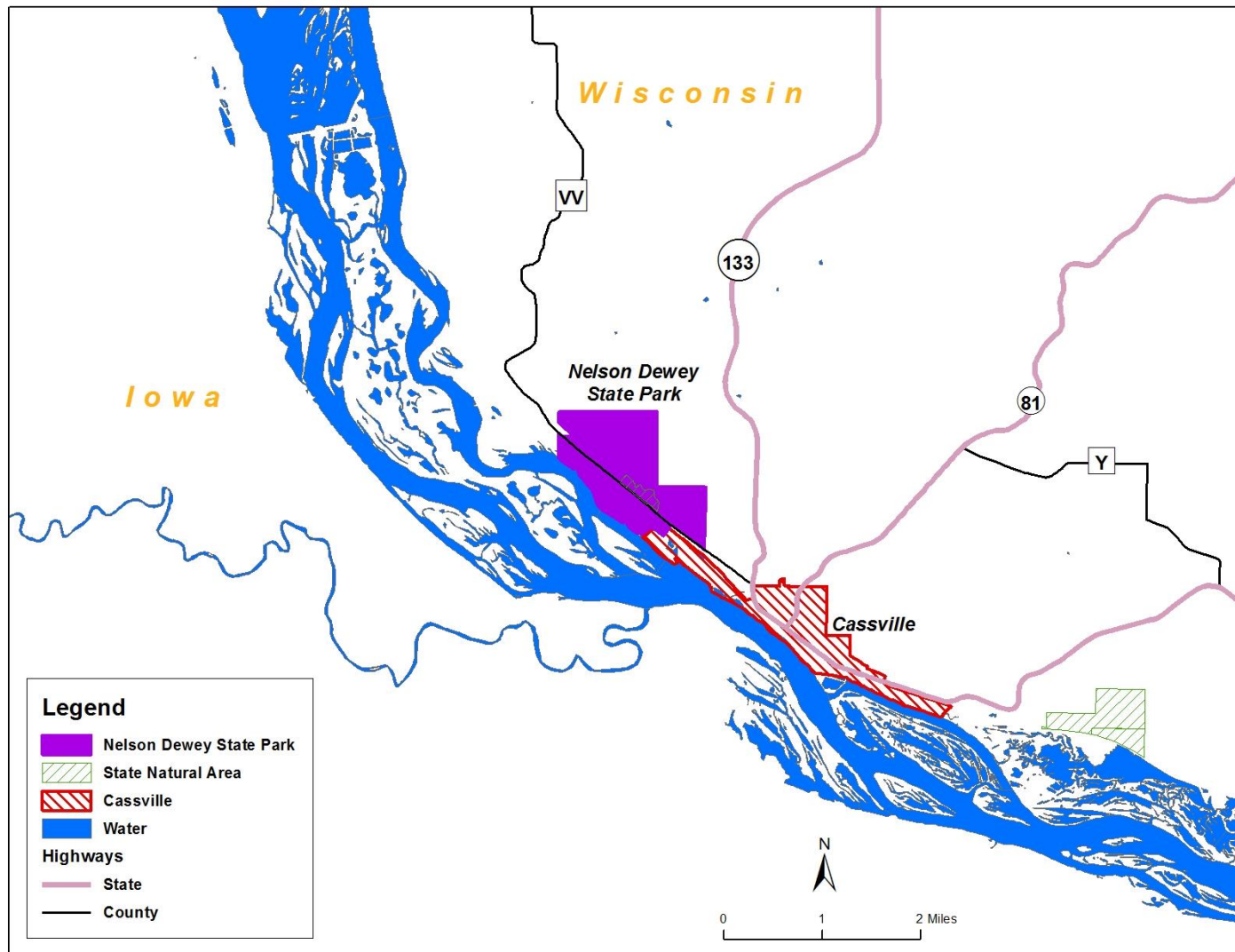
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District Ecologist

Date

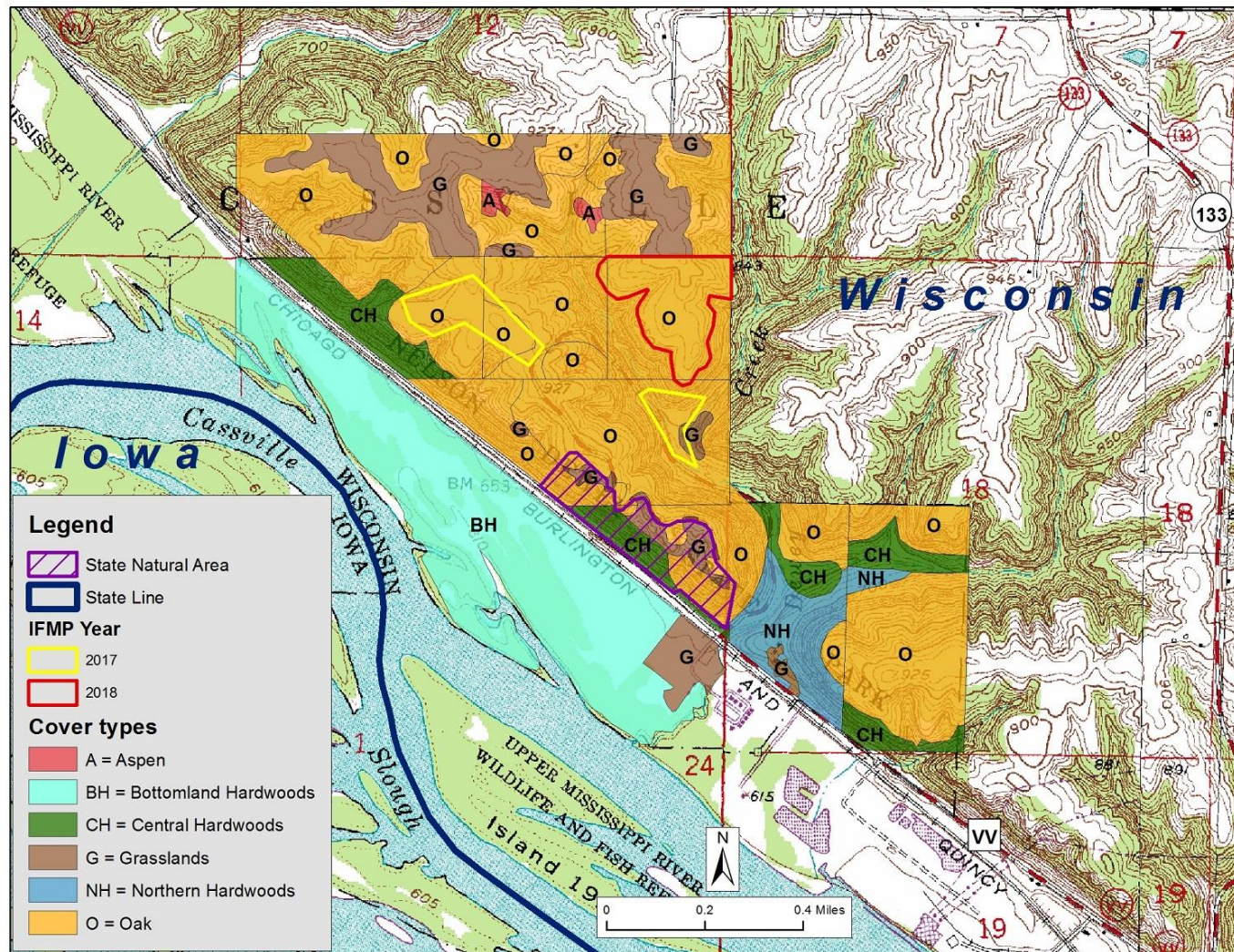


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Map 1. Nelson Dewey State Park and surrounding area.

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Map 2. Nelson Dewey State Park forest reconnaissance stands. Areas outlined in yellow are the family and group campgrounds and included in the 2017 IFMP. The red polygon is the portion of stand 22 included in this IFMP amendment. The park road corridor is not shown.